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ABSTRACT

A discussion of the English language teaching method of Toru Matsumoto, author of "Thinking in English," reconstructs the instructional principle and presents it for further development. First, the history of English language teaching in Japan is reviewed and Matsumoto's biography is sketched. The salient features of the principle are summarized, and each is evaluated and compared with other approaches and methods. Practical suggestions for improvement of second language instruction based on the principle are offered. The approach emphasizes the use of language as a means of thinking and of interpersonal communication. The approach argues that each word should be attached to personal feelings in order to attain meaning, and that intellectual understanding can only be achieved through emotional understanding. Translation is discouraged, and the native language is separated entirely from the target language. It is concluded that while the approach was intended for Japanese learners of English, it can be applied to any second language instruction. Suggestions for classroom practice include daily focus on internal use of the target language, encouragement of linguistic flexibility to develop complex ideas, instruction from macro- and micro-perspectives, and extensive and rapid reading. A 28-item bibliography is included. (MSE)

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TORU MATSUMOTO'S "THINK IN ENGLISH" APPROACH

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by

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Washington, D.C.
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INTRODUCTION

I was in a book store after I found out that I failed the college entrance exams in Japan. I was looking for English textbooks with the determination to study English harder, for English was one of my weakest subjects. There I was intrigued by one book entitled, Thinking in English, and bought the book without knowing anything about the author, Toru Matsumoto, let alone what buying this book really meant.

Almost twelve years have passed since that day. I graduated from his school (the Tokyo Matsumoto School of English) after three years of study and then worked as an instructor for the school for five years before I came to the United States to further my education. It is no exaggeration to say that the encounter with Matsumoto's book changed the entire course of my life.

Matsumoto was a teaching practitioner and not a linguist, but his insights into English teaching may still shed light on what seems to be lacking with regard to the advancement of foreign and second language teaching today.

I write this paper, therefore, in the hope that I can reconstruct Matsumoto's principle, "Think in English," and present it for its further development. To do this, I will first review a history of English education in Japan, as well as Matsumoto's biography, for background information. Then

I will summarize the salient features of Matsumoto's principle in the order of theory, objectives, and strategies. Finally, I will evaluate each of these features in the same order, comparing them with some other approaches and methods before concluding with some practical suggestions based on Matsumoto's principle for the improvement of foreign and second language teaching.

BACKGROUND

English is one of the most recent foreign languages that have been taught in the monolingual nation of Japan. As Latin and Greek were the important languages to be learned in Western countries, Chinese used to be the most vital foreign language in the long history of Japan. As the methods used to study Greek and Latin in the Western world were "later used for teaching modern languages and became the object of numerous reform efforts in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries" (Henrichsen 1989: 103), the methods for classical Chinese learning formed "a formidable foundation of pedagogical traditions" (Henrichsen: 103), which came to be known as the yakudoku approach (Japanese version of the grammar-translation method) in Japan:

> Over the years, particular Japanese ways of studying and reading Chinese without regard for oral proficiency developed. Due to the differences in the grammatical structure of the two languages, however, this reading process involved more than simply translating each Chinese word into Japanese. Therefore, the Japanese developed a complicated procedure of "reading the characters in a Chinese text by jumping back and forth to make the ideas implied in them compatible with the order of their own ideas..." In this laborious yakudoku approach, "the target language [was] first translated word-by-word, and the resulting translation reordered to match Japanese word order." (Henrichsen 1989: 107) [quatations from Minakawa 1983 and Hino 1988, respectively].

The first Western language that the Japanese learned was Portuguese because a Portuguese ship drifted to Japan in 1543,

marking the first Japanese contact with Europeans. Portuguese then became the language for communication with the other Europeans. Before the declaration of its seclusion policy to the Western nations in 1639, for example, Japan had contact with British traders and missionaries but the language used was Portuguese (Sansom 1950). Then, its long seclusion period (1639-1858), which allowed only the non-Catholic Dutch to maintain trade relations, prevented Japan from learning other foreign languages:

> The Chinese classics remained an important subject of study. The only other foreign languages studied were Portuguese and Dutch and these exclusively among physicians, because no other foreign books were admitted into the country. (Kimizuka 1977: 11)

First English Study Boom

When Commodore Perry of the United States arrived in Japan with a squadron of ships and forced Japan to end its self-imposed isolation in 1853, only a few Japanese knew the English language. Most of those who knew English were Japanese castaways who had been saved by American ships (Ota 1981). After Japan finally signed a commercial treaty with the United States in 1858, ending the isolation policy, the Japanese, both the intelligentsia and merchants, felt the urgent necessity to learn English.

Soon English became available as a subject to study in public schools such as Kaiseijo (which later became Tokyo University). Japanese began to have more contact with English speaking people.

Some notable English-teaching missionaries came to teach in Japan, such as Guido Fridolin Verbeck and James Curtis Hepburn, who both arrived in 1859, and Samuel Rollins Brown in 1862, while many Japanese were sent abroad (Henrichsen 1989). Yet, as Henrichsen (P. 118) cites, there was a scarcity of English materials available during this period in Japan:

> The 1860 mission to America returned with two copies of Webster's dictionary. Reports that "those dictionaries were considered so valuable to students of English that they crowded around them as ants swarming around lumps of sugar" [quotation from Minakawa 1953].

However, the quality of the English learning environment dramatically improved with the help of the Meiji Restoration in 1867 when the Shogun returned his powers to the Emperor. The following year, Emperor Meiji announced the policies called "Charter Oath of Five Articles" for the founding of the new Japan. The fifth "Article" particularly stressed the importance of learning foreign culture: "The foundation of the Imperial regime shall be strengthened by the acquisition of knowledge from throughout the world" (Nippon Steel Human Resources Development 1988: 49).

The Meiji government immediately implemented this idea in the educational field. The government hired more foreign educators and provided more scholarships for studying abroad. In 1871 there were already 200 Japanese students studying in America (Bryant 1956). The government also organized the Ministry of Education in 1871, which planned "a national system

of universal education which was put into effect in 1872" (Kimizuka 1977:11).

Ota (1981) says that the 'fever' of learning English achieved the first peak in about 1872-3 and calls the following decade Eigo Meijin Jidai (the period of English masters), when people had the elementary education through the peak period and then received the higher education during the following ten years. In fact the Japanese schools offered the most ideal environment for students to learn English in Japan's history during this period. Bryant remarks, "The period between 1870 and 1890 saw English established firmly as a second language in Japan, taught largely by several hundred American missionaries assisted by Japanese students returning from the United States and England" (P. 22). English (in some cases French and German) was used as a means of teaching almost all subjects in higher schools. Moreover, it was not only European educators but also Japanese instructors who conducted classes in English. As for students during this period, although they were a small elite, they were competent in receiving instruction in English. Pyle (1969:60) cites Ernest Fenollosa, a Harvard graduate who "held the first chair in philosophy at Tokyo University," who remarked in 1880:

> Some two hundred students were at work in the special elective courses, reading English books, and speaking and writing that language fluently. A finer set of young men, or more earnest workers and keener thinkers, cannot, I venture to say, be found in any university in the world.

Rise of Nationalism and Yakudoku Approach

The period of the "English Masters" did not last too long because of the arising national consciousness bent on preserving Japanese tradition and culture. Tokutomi, "perhaps the most widely recognized spokesman for the new generation" (Pyle 1969: 25), represents this view, talking about his alma mater, Doshisha:

> Doshisha was a completely American school. There was no recess for national holidays. The Japanese flag was not flown. There were no banzais for the Emperor...And then it was always 'America this and America that,' completely forgetting Japanese things. This I detested. (cited in Pyle 1969:83)

Ota (1981) raises several specific policies that the government implemented in order to strengthen the national identity: (1) to increase Japanese related studies, (2) to lay off foreign professors, (3) to close down many English language schools which helped many students to learn English, preparing to go to higher schools, and (4) to use Japanese as a medium of instruction in any course.

I must hasten to add, however, that Japanese were still aware of the necessity to keep up with the Western countries. As far as schools were concerned, the Ministry of Education announced the increase of foreign language hours in higher schools, which meant for liberal arts majors to take two-thirds of their total credits in foreign languages (Ota:1981). The Ministry also strengthened English study in middle schools:

> In 1902 the Ministry of Education published a course of study for middle schools, and English was placed in a rigid curriculum; that is, the preparation of students for the highly competitive entrance examinations for higher schools which were preparatory schools for universities. English was one of the five important subjects for the examinations, the other four being Japanese, Chinese classics, mathematics, and science. The examination for English required "translation from English into Japanese" and "analysis of English sentences according to the grammatical rules" as its main part. The oral aspect of English was no doubt ignored (Kimizuka 1977:12).

Thus, the intent of raising the national consciousness did not necessarily lead to de-emphasis of foreign language learning as long as Japanese was a means of instruction in teaching foreign languages. Unfortunately, this meant the return to the traditional yakudoku approach used for reading classic Chinese, and created the infamous language tests for college entrance exams, and marked the beginning of the long-term unproductive struggle with English learning in Japan.

English and World War II

The effect of returning to the yakudoku approach was simply devastating. The need to change the teaching method was apparent:

> A foreign language is thus made an exercise of the eyes and not of the ears...Its best helps are books and worst trials conversation. We treat modern European languages with as much respect and intellectual profit as Europeans treat classical languages. The serious difference in our case, however, is that the languages we study are not yet dead. (Nitobe 1923, cited in Bryant 1956:22)

"Concerned about the general failure of Japanese students to learn to speak English" (Henrichsen 1989:122), a few prominent

Japanese invited the prominent British linguist Harold E. Palmer to become a linguistic adviser to the Ministry of Education in 1922. Yet, Palmer's attempts to reform the teaching method into his Oral Method were not exactly successful. Besides the question of pure methodological factors, his position was not powerful enough to achieve reform. In fact, he was a "gift" to the Ministry of Education from a wealthy Japanese citizen who paid the salary for Palmer (Anderson 1969:147). The Ministry did not want anything drastic to happen because "reforms imposed, or even proposed, from on high would upset too many important apple carts" (147). Thus, Palmer's "connection with the ministry remained simply an advisory one" and he was not "able to learn what was going on in high level discussions"; hence "his influence was apparently exerted thenceforth from outside the public school system rather than from within" (Bryant 1956: 25-26). As a result, Palmer's textbooks Standard English Readers, for example, "gained their converts among Japanese Middle School teachers--but not all that many. The same applied to the more advanced texts in the 'English as Speech Series' subsequently produced by Plamer...There they were as models for a few enthusiasts to use" (Anderson 1969:148).

To make the matter even worse, the Japanese military expansion strongly influenced the educational content, including foreign language classes:

> Unfortunately for the development of language teaching, the growing enthusiasm for "spoken English" was discouraged

> by the increasing ultra-nationalistic trend in education in the 1930's...the study of foreign language, namely English, became optional in secondary schools after the first two years. Formerly, it was required throughout the five years. Then, with the outbreak of World War II, even the study of English was suspected as a sign of disloyalty to the country...(Kimizuka 1977:13)

Palmer returned to England in 1936, and other prominent English teaching specialists such as A.S. Hornby also left Japan before the war. The teaching of English was completely banned by 1944.

Post War English Study Boom and Controversy

The defeat in the war (1945) brought about another revolutionary change in Japan second only to that of the Meiji Restoration, yet this time the reform was solely imposed by the U.S Allied Occupation of Japan (1945-52) through the writing of the new Constitution. Among the major changes in education, it became compulsory for Japanese children to attend school for nine years instead of six years. All institutions of higher learning were changed into four-year universities, and at least one public university was to be established in each prefecture.

As a result, the population of Japanese who study English has increased drastically. In 1956 Bryant reported that in the preceeding twenty-five years the number of children who studied a second language had increased nearly twenty fold.

However, it should not be misunderstood that the Occupation reformers forced Japanese to study English. On the contrary, they "largely ignored the subject of foreign language teaching in Japan" because they "were apparently reluctant to seem to

be forcing their language on a conquered people" (Bryant 1956:27). The Occupation period may have been the last chance to reform the English language teaching methods, but the opportunity was lost.

Thus, the yakudoku approach of grammar-translation has remained. Moreover, due to the Japanese tendency toward uniformity at all levels, including materials and methodology, students learn English in this particular approach at any regular school. Textbooks, for example, must be approved by the Ministry of Education and do not basically differ from one publisher's to another, covering the similar graded grammar points and vocabulary.

Although foreign language study has also remained as elective in junior high schools, the schools offer English classes at all levels as it it were compulsory. In general, Japanese learn English at the age of twelve at the latest, and almost one hundred percent of them study it for six years before they graduate from senior high school. English is also commonly taken to satisfy the first foreign language requirement by college students, regardless of their majors.

Despite many hours of English instruction at school, Japanese hardly attain a satisfactory level of proficiency. Reischauer (1974:299) comments "extremely few Japanese...can attempt even a simple conversation in English." Learners themselves know this fact more than anybody else. Many of them seek to study

English far beyond the many years of their formal education in English, and countless commercial English schools flourish throughout Japan. The market for self-study English textbooks is always booming, indicating the dissatisfaction of Japanese people with the way English has been taught in regular schools.

Educators are well aware of the fact, and there have been numerous heated debates on the subject. Although these debates begin with the evaluation of the methods, the argument is inclined to result in the question of whether studying English is of any value at all. There is a tendency to regard English as, after all, a foreign language that most Japanese can live without knowing (for example, Hiraizumi and Watanabe 1975). As one of the consequences of this kind of argument, in 1981 the Ministry of Education decided to decrease the number of English classes in junior high school by one hour a week.

In contrast with the decrease of English hours, the grammar-translation method, which has "long been rejected for use in any situation in which the learner wants to acquire a language for contemporary, active use" (Yalden 1987: 3) in other parts of the world, still shows no sign of being retired in Japan. Any attempt to reform it basically has failed. One of the largest organized reform projects was the Rockefeller-funded English Language Exploratory Committee (ELEC) which attempted to spread the Oral Approach by American linguist Charles Fries. ELEC started its project for "the transformation

of English language teaching methods in schools and universities throughout Japan" (cited in Henrichsen 1989:194) in 1955 but in vain:

> Robert Lado,...commented, "ELEC was defeated. They were sidetracked." Even Yamabe probably Fries' staunchest supporter in Japan and a long-time member of the ELEC staff, admitted, "I don't think ELEC succeeded in overcoming Monbusho resistance." (Henrichsen 1989:194)

In his book, Henrichsen argues that relative advantages of the methods alone are insufficient to bring about a change in English teaching methods in Japan and that other factors, including political, economical, and social variables, must be considered. The discussion of methodological reform is not within the scope of this paper, yet as Palmer's case indicated, the power structure may be the most crucial factor of all in Japan. Lado said to Henrichsen, "if you start at the grass roots, you don't get anywhere at all. You have to start at the top" (Henrichsen 1989:135). In the hierachical, centralized, and conservative Japanese society, unless and until some strong mandate calls for drastic changes, the Japanese method of teaching will perhaps never be reformed.

Dr. Toru Matsumoto (1913-1979)

Toru Matsumoto was born and raised in Japan before he became 22 and went to the United States, where he lived for 14 years from 1935 to 1949 (a very difficult period for Japanese to be in the States because of the bad image of the Japanese military aggression). Granted an Oriental Scholarship at Union Theological Seminary, he received a Bachelor of Divinity in 1938 and then worked for the Japanese Students' Christian Association of North America. Because of the outbreak of World War II in 1941, he was sent to a concentration camp as an alien enemy for one year before he was released on parole.

Matsumoto then worked for the resettlement of Japanese Americans under the auspices of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, visiting 48 different states, and delivering as many as 1,000 speeches to improve the acceptance of Japanese Americans as American citizens by other Americans. He also wrote several books in English in the U.S. such as Beyond Prejudices: A story of the Church and Japanese Americans and The Seven Stars.

Realizing the necessity to rebuild Japan from the field of education, Matsumoto went to Teacher's College of Columbia University, and upon receiving the degree of Doctor of Education in 1949, he returned to Japan.

After his return to Japan, Matsumoto was perhaps most popularly known for his radio program called "English Conversation," which started in 1951 on NHK (Nippon Hoso Kyokai/Japan Broadcasting Corporation). His 15-minute program was broadcast daily except Sundays and was by far the most popular of all language courses in the mass media of that era. Bryant (1956:44) notes that a total of 80,000 monthly textbooks were sold for three different English courses on NHK radio in April, 1953, and then continues by singling out Matsumoto's program:

> By the fall of 1954, when there were at least four English courses given over the networks of NHK, 60,000 monthly texts were purchased for one conversation course alone, broadcast daily at 6:45 A.M.!

Matsumoto continued the program for 21 years, writing new textbooks each year until 1972, a year after receiving an NHK Hoso Bunka Sho (Broadcasting Culture Award) in recognition of his outstanding contribution to the improvement of the mass media in the educational field.

Because of his enormous popularity as this radio program's instructor, however, he tended to be misidentified as only a "conversation" teacher. In reality, he published innumerable textbooks and reference books not only on speaking but also on listening, reading, and writing.

Matsumoto also taught at Meiji Gakuin University, Japan Women's University, and Ferris Women's University. During the last eight years of his life, he also lectured at Toru Matsumoto

Higher School of English (presently called the Tokyo Matsumoto School of English) that was established to put his ideas into practice in 1971 by some of his fervent disciples.

Throughout his teaching career, Matsumoto labored vigorously for the improvement of the English proficiency of the Japanese people until he passed away in June, 1979. He desired a powerful change in the almost static condition of English language teaching in Japan and set up a higher goal, especially for youth:

> My challenge to the youth of Japan is:
> "Make Japan a global reality. Let her break through the language barrier, and go out to all the world."
> (Matsumoto 1980:244)

"To break through the language barrier," he advocated learning English with the principle "think in English." Although he was supported by his faithful listeners and readers throughout Japan, still, he also faced "strong resistance" from the people who insisted that "the Japanese cannot possibly think in a language other than Japanese" (Matsumoto 1980:preface). Some opposed the principle itself by saying that even if it were possible, Japanese should not think in English but in Japanese. Others denied the idea because they never believed that it was possible to implement his principle in a regular school system in Japan.

However, Matsumoto's principle seems to have been neither correctly understood nor fully explored. Therefore, I will now introduce his thesis of "thinking in English" again.

THE THEORY OF "THINK IN ENGLISH"

As can be seen from the brief description of their history, English teaching practices in Japan today have been left behind, being similar to foreign language teaching situations in Europe and the U.S. when "Grammar Translation" prevailed "from the 1840s to the 1940s" (Richards & Rodgers 1986: 4). Hence, it may not be coincidental that Matsumoto's ideas may appear to be identical to some of the ideas of European reformers. Like many European reformers, such as Sauveur, Matsumoto was opposed to using the mother tongue as a means of instruction. He was likewise against translation and tedious explanation of grammar. He also focused on practical use of language as a means of communication, paying attention to oral proficiency and pronunciation.

It is regretable, however, that Matsumoto's "think in English" approach tends to be recognized among Japanese linguists as identical to the approaches of European reformers because it is not the same as either the Direct method or the Natural method. To make the matter more confusing, the phrase "think in English/(L2)" has been commonly used in many different ways without being clearly defined. One of Palmer's oral-drill books published in Japan, for example, was entitled Thinking in English. The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language (Crystal 1987), as another example, explains that in the Direct method, "learners

are encouraged to think in the foreign language, and not to translate into or out of it" (P.374).

However, it is this idea of "thinking" in the target language that fundamentally sets Matsumoto's ideas apart from all other methods, including the Direct method. For Matsumoto, to "think in English" was more than an "encouragement"; it was the basic theory.

Language as a Means of Thinking

The relationship between language and thought brings about interesting but endless arguments such as whether or not people can think rationally without using language. Many questions about this relationship "have exercised generations of philosophers, psychologists, and linguists" (Crystal 1987:14). Matsumoto, however, was only interested in the undisputed relationship that language is a means of thinking. As Slobin (1971) states in his book Psycholinguistics:

> For the present--and for the indefinite future--all we can say is that language is an integral component of thought, but neither language nor speech can be equated with thought....Language can be used internally as a tool of thought, and interpersonally as a tool of communication. (P. 153)

Thus, Matsumoto paid particular attention to the language use for internal or intra-personal communication, in regarding English as a means of communication. To put it differently, Matsumoto believed this internal use of language for thinking

to be essential in order to communicate with others as well.

Matsumoto stressed that this internal use of language is essential not only in oral skills but also in all of the four basic language skills. For example, in writing, he suggested thinking ahead and imagining some key words to be written simaltaneous with the activity of writing. This is, in my interpretation, the activation of the internal use of language while engaging in the external use of language--writing (see more specific description of this in the section on **Strategies**).

Theory of Learning

In order to use language as a tool for thinking, Matsumoto (1970:223-5) explained that language must become both various and accurate so that it can be used for not only abstract but also concrete thoughts. He alluded that language must become a part of character.

According to him, to acquire this kind of tool, it is also important to understand that the idea behind each word may also vary, not only from country to country but also from person to person. Choosing the example of the words "father" and "mother," Matsumoto explained that "father" gave him only abstract impressions like "uncle," from the time he went to school, while "mother" was very realistic to him.

In other words, Matsumoto went on, unless each single word was attached to special personal feelings, it would not become a part of character. Thus, to "understand" the language, the "sound" must be related to our "emotional movement" according to him In the case of children, he asserted that it was always "emotional movement" or "emotional experience" which then became the "emotional understanding" of language. The "intellectual understanding" of the language was the consequence of this process and could never be achieved without "emotional understanding."

He argued that teaching English through translation, for example, did not provide learners with this process of learning. If words are translated from English into Japanese, the learner's "emotional experience" with Japanese becomes the basic understanding for English at best, for the image of the Japanese word overshadows that of English.

Accordingly, so that learners could gain "emotional experience" in English, Matsumoto did not approve of the translation method and the use of the mother tongue in teaching. He believed that only "emotional experience" with words in the target language would grow and become a part of character and was the foundation to thinking freely in the English language.

Hence, according to my interpretation, the proper language input should be basically "sound" which could be understood emotionally rather than intellectually, and the key to language acquisition lay fundamentally in this process of semantic understanding in his view.

OBJECTIVES

With his principle of "think in English," Matsumoto proposed that Japanese students of English do away with the habit of translation, and learn English as it is natively spoken and ultimately be able to use English at the level of educated native speakers. It might look like a tall order to set his objectives at such an advanced level but he seriously felt the need to advocate the method for Japanese to reach this level of proficiency. He was disapointed that in spite of the number of textbooks and methods available, none of them were designed to lead students all the way to the top by helping students to overcome the strong "barrier" of thinking in Japanese.

In Matsumoto's opinion, English and Japanese had to be completely separated for Japanese speakers to arrive at this ultimate goal, and when Japanese used English they had to think in English and never in Japanese. In other words, until and unless Japanese people learned to separate the two languages, they would be unable to overcome the language barrier.

Specifically, the problems that Japanese people face as a result of the language barrier may be categorized into two types: qualitative and quantitative. By the qualitative problem, I mean the problem with inaccuracy and inappropiate production, as well as misuse of English sentences in social context. The quantitative problem means a limited ability to speak and to

listen for a long time, as well as to write and read a great deal.

Among the qualitative errors that Japanese make, one kind may be labeled as errors of syntax or semantics. Matsumoto argued that one of the major reasons for these errors was because Japanese speakers create their own English with translation and with their grammar knowledge of English. To make the matter even worse, English, created in this manner without thinking in English, could be seen at all levels of speakers from the beginners to the advanced. Some of the examples of these errors he cited were as follows:

1) "Please be my friend" and "Please be intimate with me" for "Be friends with me" (1980:31);

2) "As the weather is fine today, if I climbed that tower, the scenery would be good" for "This is such a beautiful day! The view from the top of that tower must be gorgeous" (1965:145);

3) "No passing through unless in case of emergency" for "No passing through except in an emergency" (1965:14).

These sentences may be written at various proficiency levels of English learners, but they clearly show that the writers were not thinking in English but in Japanese.

Another kind of qualitative problem is a pragmatic one where information is misinterpreted not because of syntactic or semantic errors as discussed but because of the use of a situationally inappropriate sentence. Matsumoto (1980:344)

accused the use of Japanese in thinking for making most of this type of errors:

> ...most of our "errors" have their roots in the fact that we do our thinking in Japanese even when we are conversing or writing in English. What is natural in Japanese often sounds quaint when translated into English....As we invite our guest to dinner, we preface our invitation with "There's nothing to be eaten," but on the table will be a pile of rare and tasty food. We are finding out that our brand of modesty does not pay.
> (Matsumoto 1980: 344)

"There is nothing to be eaten" is inappropriate in this particular situation because it does not function to convey the true message in English although it may be used correctly in some other situations.

Pragmatic errors of this type may be more serious than syntactic and semantic counterparts because they may not be recognized as errors by both speakers and listeners. In "Language Habits of the Japanese," Kinoshita (1988:19) began his article with this anecdote:

> SEVERAL years after the end of World War II, when we had resumed contact with researchers from Europe and North America, I had a chance to show a group of Western scientists around. After a day of walking about, I asked them, 'Aren't you tired?' Great was my surprise when one of them came out with a forthright 'Yes, I am.' I next ventured, 'You must be hungry.' Once again I was taken aback by the casual reply, 'Yes, I'm hungry.'
>
> Most Japanese, unless speaking to a very close friend, would reply to the first query with something like 'Iie, betsu ni' (Not especially). At most they might admit, 'Ikuraka' (A little). They would think it inconsiderate to admit fatigue to a person who had acted as their guide all day. And to avoid worrying their host, they would parry the second question with something like 'Ie, itsumo bangohan wa osoi-n desu' (No, I always eat a late supper) even if they were actually quite hungry.

> To this day, I find myself hard put to say, 'Yes, I'm tired,' to Westerners in situations like this and am liable instead to blurt out automatically, 'Not at all!'

As I indicated, the pragmatic difference may lead to not only misproduction but also misinterpretation of messages. Although it may not have been the case with Kinoshita, it is quite possible for the Japanese to misconstrue such frank and honest statements by an English speaker as inconsiderate and impolite, on the part of a particular speaker or the English speaking culture itself.

Coincidentally, Matsumoto had a similar anecdote. When he was a student in the U.S., an American family once invited him over to their house. The host asked if he was hungry. In fact, he was starving then but answered in a Japanese way that he had already eaten; consequently he missed the dinner (1980:45). Sociolinguistically analyzed, his utterance (speech act) "I have already eaten" does not have the same function (norm) of interpretation as it does in Japanese in this kind of social situation.

On a larger scale, the qualitative problem leads to the problem of logic as Kaplan (1966) attempted to explain that different thought patterns seem to be reflected in languages. Matsumoto believed that by thinking in English, by processing a string of thoughts entirely in English, one can consequently learn to use English logic as well.

Besides the qualitative problem, Japanese must overcome the quantitative problem, and thinking ability in English, separated from that in Japanese, was vital in Matsumoto's opinion to increase the amount and the speed with which Japanese can understand and use English.

Because Japanese think in Japanese when using English, they have to perform like acrobats in handling interactions in English. If asked to respond to questions in English, they must listen to the words in the questions carefully and translate them word-by-word into Japanese, decipher the meaning by changing their order, think about the response in Japanese, find English equivalents for the Japanese words, change both the order and the form of the English words according to their knowldedge of English grammar, and then respond in English as soon as possible. Similar activity takes place in reading and writing, but this time consulting bilingual dictionaries. This kind of process naturally takes time. Even if they may be trained to be able to do this kind of acrobatic activity faster, they quickly tire and thus they can hardly process information for a long time.

Therefore, it is a fundamental requirement for Japanese not to think in Japanese when using English but to think always in English to increase their efficiency.

In addition to doing away with translation activities, Japanese should learn skills to think ahead in English to process more information in English in a limited amount of time. Matsumoto used to say that thinking in English did not only mean 'not to think in Japanese' but to 'think ahead in English.' By this, he meant developing the ability to predict what learners hear and read, as well as to think ahead of what they will speak and write during the course of action. This ability to anticipate and to plan mentally in English is essential for reaching the level of writing 2000 words per hour and reading a page a minute that Matsumoto believed to be standard abilities (see more detailed discussions in the **STRATEGIES** section).

In summary, Matsumoto's general objective was the attainment of native speaker like proficiency by overcoming both qualitative and quantitative problems with the help of "thinking in English" practice.

STRATEGIES

Matsumoto mainly designed textbooks for self-study rather than for classroom teaching. The following list is my summary of his main learning strategies:

1) Listen to good authentic English.
2) Imitate good authentic English.
3) Memorize whole sentences.
4) Memorize whole stories.
5) Think things out in English.
6) Carry on self-conversations in English.
7) Speak in public.
8) Speak beyond the patterns.
9) Think while speaking.
10) Think ahead of partners in conversation.
11) Listen to important words.
12) Predict messages in listening.
13) Read without translating.
14) Read fast.
15) Read a great deal.
16) Write without thinking in Japanese.
17) Write fast.
18) Write a great deal.
19) Understand in English.
20) Live in English.
21) Switch language channels instantly.

I will now explain each item with some illustrations and sample exercises where appropriate.

1) Listen to good authentic English.

As his theory of learning indicates, Matsumoto believed that "sounds" play one of the fundamental roles to cause "emotional movement." Therefore, the sounds to listen to must be not only good in terms of pronunciation but also authentic, natural, vivid, and living rather than mechanical.

2) Imitate good authentic English.

Imitation is the fundamental method of learning pronunciation. Matsumoto approved the use of phonetic signs but emphasized the importance of training the speech muscles to be able to imitate the sounds. The use of katatakana, Japanese letters, was strictly forbidden to learn pronunciation.

3) Memorize basic sentences.

Matsumoto recommended that learners memorize basic sentence structures immediately rather than to learn the patterns through lengthy drill practices. Memorization, however, should be done through reading out loud and through careful attention to pronunciation. As junior high school textbooks cover various basic sentence structures, he suggested that memorizing the first two volumes of the reading textbooks would be sufficient to express fundamental thoughts in English.

4) Memorize whole stories.

After memorizing basic sentences, learners at all levels should memorize stories or articles which contain subjects interesting to the learners. Once again, reproduction of proper sounds is essential, and learners must memorize by speaking out loud with careful attention to pronunciation, rhythm, and intonation. Reading materials with audio aids are helpful, and so Matsumoto wrote a number of these materials. In addition, when he wrote stories, he tried to make them as living as possible so that the stories might bring about "emotional experience" on the part of learners.

Memorization also reduces the necessity of studying the fine points of grammar. He disregarded the studying of grammar for the sake of grammar study. He wanted learners to learn grammar more naturally in order to be able to sense awkwardness in incorrect sentences (1970:222).

At a basic level, memorization is also intended to avoid translation and to retain English sentences. By focusing on memorizing sentences as sounds, learners should stop translating every word. Even if they cannot help thinking about the meaning in Japanese initially, they can still recall English sentences if they memorize.

5) Think things out in English.

To elaborate on what thinking things out means, Matsumoto (1965:151) listed the following verbs and encouraged learners to make it a habit to do these activities mentally in English: digest, discuss, study, weigh, review, ponder, judge, decide, remember, recall, remind, form ideas, invent, devise, etc.

Matsumoto also wrote problem solving exercises that learners should do using English. It is more important for learners not to think in Japanese than to find correct answers. The following are some of the exercises in Think in English:

> Mrs. Wood is out shopping. She wants to buy some fruit today. At the first store she finds good-looking apples priced at 180 yen each. At the second store she sees the the same kind of apples at 1,000 yen for 6. 180 yen x 6 = 1,080 yen.
> * Where do you think Mrs. Wood will buy the apples? (P.255)
>
> When you can't go to sleep do you:
> 1. Get up and do something?
> 2. Read?
> 3. Count?
> 4. Think? (P. 259)
>
> I am interested in the girl at the next desk. I think she likes me, too. But they have a silly rule at our company that an employee must not marry another employee.
> 1. Should I turn my interest else where?
> 2. Should I propose to her anyway, and if she accepts, she could quit?
> 3. Should I ask her to work at some other company after we get married? (P. 263)

The first exercise includes a little calculation and weighing the first store against the second to buy apples. The second involves recalling the experience of the learner. The third one calls for discussion and making decisions.

6) Carry on self-conversations in English.

This is another direct exercise to use English in thinking. Learners can pick out any topic or object around themselves and start talking to themselves. Matsumoto's example began this way (1970:225):

> This is a ball-point pen. I bought it for a hundred yen. It writes well. I have a fountain pen. It's a very special pen, because my best friend gave it to me. There is a tea cup. I drank green tea from it a few minutes ago. There is an ash-tray. I also see a cigarette case, a vase, a clock and several pictures....

Matsumoto also suggested the technique of holding imaginary conversations in one's head as Matsumoto did when he was a student in Japan (1970:31):

> I: Do you see the girl over there?
> Friend: Yes.
> I: Isn't she pretty?
> F: Yes, do you know her?
> I: No, I don't. But I wish I did.
> F: Do you see her often?
> I: I see her every morning. I think she goes to Aoyama Gakuin.
> F: Your sister goes to Aoyama, doesn't she?
> I: Yes.
> F: Maybe she is a friend of your sister's.
> I: I wonder if she sees me every morning.
> F: Maybe she does. Maybe she knows what time you go to school, and she leaves home just in time to see you here.
> I: Do you think I should speak to her?
> F: No, don't do that. She will think you are too bold.
> I: I guess you are right.

7) Speak in public.

Learners must practice speaking English whenever possible, in addition to silent speaking described above. Most Japanese people feel so shy about speaking English that they tend to

speak in a small voice and in an inarticulate manner without making eye contact. Thus, speaking is encouraged not only for the improvement of physiological motor activities but also for overcoming this kind of psychological handicap.

8) Speak beyond the patterns.

Matsumoto encouraged students to practice speaking beyond the patterns, for speaking by patterns (1) may create only simple responses that may not be as colorful as they should be, (2) may not create natural flow of thoughts and that of sentence connections, and (3) may restrict expressions (1965:169-174).

He said the key to successful speaking was in the ability to express the same message in different words. For example, a speaker does not have to stick to the sentence pattern "--too--to--" as in "I am too busy to go out with you today." Instead, he/she should be able to begin with any word, such as 'you,' 'there,' 'today,' and 'tomorrow,' to convey the similar information (1965:175):

> "You had better go alone, because I am busy today";
> "There are too many things I must do today. Please go out without me";
> "Today is not a very good day for me to go out with you";
> "Tomorrow I can, but not today."

Matsumoto suggested that learners exercise the following kind of activities to increase their flexibility, which also improves both their fluency and confidence as speakers:

EXAMPLES:
1. At that time Alice and I were living several hundred miles apart.
(a) The word is We.
We, that is Alice and I, were living several hundred miles apart at that time.
(b) The word is You.
You may be interested in knowing that at that time Alice and I were living several hundred miles apart.
(c) The word is In.
In those days Alice and I were living several hundred miles apart. (1980:202)

There is no one correct answer for any question, and answers are only suggested as references in the textbook. This exercise should encourage learners to produce sentences more freely, deriving any sentence from the fundamental structural knowledge learners have gained. At the initial stage, learners do not need to worry about grammar or correctness as long as the message can be conveyed.

Yet, as learners advance, this kind of exercise, Matsumoto asserts, will technically reduce the chances of making grammatical mistakes, especially the areas Japanese have trouble with, such as articles, tense, and distinction between singular and plurals. If a speaker means to say "That's the thing to do" but mistakenly starts with "That's an," for example, the speaker may continue with "excellent thing to do" (p. 229).

9) Think while speaking.

One of the reasons Matsumoto discouraged learners to speak following the drill patterns was that the patterns alone had a tendency to enable learners only to ask and answer questions in a real speech situation. Matsumoto (1965:177-8) commented

that questions and answers were different from a conversation and warned learners not to carry on a conversation like the following although this kind of skit could be found in many textbooks:

A: Who is that man telephoning over there?
B: He is Mr. Sasaki.
A: What is he?
B: He is the General Manager.

He said that learning to talk like the above might only help some beginners, but not learners in general because one could hardly continue a conversation in this manner for a long time. To make conversations richer and more meaningful, Matsumoto advised that learners practice thinking as they carry on conversations. When speakers think while speaking, Matsumoto said the interaction will be more natural and something like the following:

A: Who is that man telephoning over there?
B: Do you mean the man in the gray suit?
A: Yes. His face looks familiar.
B: Yes. I have seen him around. Isn't he the General Manager of this hotel?
A: Do you know his name?
B: I believe he is Mr. Sasaki.

10) Think ahead of partners in conversation.

This tip is vital for the learner to be a competent conversationalist. The learner needs to improve an ability to predict what he/she will hear and to lead a conversation when necessary. Matsumoto (1965) analyzed the following interaction as an example:

A: I hear that your son is going to Harvard. It's great, Pete.
B: Thanks, Frank. He wasn't sure he would make it, but fortunately he was accepted.
A: Like father, like son, eh?
B: Where is your boy?
A: He went west.
B: No kidding. What's out there for him?

36

A: He likes wide open country. He says he wants to explore the wilderness for a year, and then make up his mind.
B: A chip off the old block. (p.180)

Matsumoto interpreted that B (Pete) anticipated A (Frank)'s utterance "going to Harvard" as soon as A said "I hear that your son..." B also expected that A would say "but fortunately he was accepted" when A said "He wasn't sure he would...." Matsumoto went on to explain that B got the lead of the conversation, although A started it, and that B was thinking ahead of the next topic while answering A's initial question and waited for the chance to ask "Where is your son?"

11) Listen to important words.

Listening was the most difficult skill of all in his view because one can read the same part again in reading and can speak and write at one's own pace in speaking and writing (1965:186). Besides the ability to comprehend an aural message (sound), listening also involves the ability to retain information.

Thus, as in the case with rapid and extensive reading (which will be discussed below), learners should practice finding main points in order to process and to remember extensive, and often

rapid, aural information. In other words, learners should not practice listening only from micro perspectives, trying to comprehend every single sound they hear. They need to hear an aural message from much wider, macro perspectives. As apractical exercise, Matsumoto (1965) suggested note-taking exercises where students take minimum notes (a few important words) and summarize the aural message from the notes either by speaking or writing.

12) Predict messages in listening.

The ability to predict what learners will hear next not only helps them become better conversationalists but also is a vital tool for grasping and retaining an important message in any listening situations. To improve this skill, learners need to increase their knowledge of the topics about which they listen to and also to practice mentally relating background knowledge to what they hear all through the medium of English.

13) Read without translating.

Although Matsumoto believed that sound played a central role in language acquisition and that reading and writing could be waived initially, unlike many European reformers, Matsumoto regarded reading as the most powerful source of learning to improve the overall language skills and to think in English. His motto "Read, read, read" reflects his thoughts; yet reading never meant translating but understanding in English what is printed in English from his perspective. In so doing, learners

increase the English input, acquire the English thinking process and logic, and become able to think fast as well.

To read without translating into Japanese, learners must try to understand sentences as they read, not by reading back and forth as in the yakudoku translation method (discussed in the **BACKGROUND** section).

The use of English-Japanese dictionaries is not basically allowed. Only when the English-English dictionaries do not give any clue to understanding a particular word, learners may be allowed to consult the bilingual dictionary, provided they keep reading in the right order (left to right and then downward) and memorize its usage in a sentence.

14) Read fast. (outlining, predicting)

Matsumoto (1980:77) asserted that the speed of thinking directly relates to the speed of reading and that learners must practice reading English fast to be able to think in English fast. To read faster, he (1980:78) suggested undoing the following four habits: (1) translation; (2) looking up every single new word; (3) reading each word too carefully; (4) reading out loud.

As practical rules, he (1965) suggested learners look at a group of words together, dividing each line into about three groups of words. After doing the exercises of reading words as blocks, learners practice finding important words in each block, thus finding about three important words in each line.

Finding important words should be done through practicing rather than defining them by a class of words because classification may take time. Yet, in general, Matsumoto commented that nouns and transitive verbs, as well as beginning and ending words in each sentence, tended to be most important. Predictive ability, not only by linguistic but also by general knowledge, takes a key role in speed reading as well.

He suggested that learners start with single sentences from which they practice picking out key words. For example, learners can study a short sentence like "My father is smoking in his study," and may choose the three words, 'father,' 'smoking,' and 'study,' which are enough to understand the message.

In reading long articles, learners should practice summarizing each paragraph in only one sentence which contains very important words, immediately after reading the paragraph. By so doing, learners should be able to read faster with understanding.

Practicing reading in this manner also makes it unnecessary for the learners to read each word out loud and check every new word in the dictionary, let alone translate everything.

Lastly, Matsumoto recommended practice in reading faster by timing the speed of reading. He cautioned, however, that reading without understanding would not serve any purpose. Learners should read until they can grasp the meaning and improve their time gradually. As a rule of thumb, Matsumoto (1965) set the goals of reading novels (fiction) as follows:

> For high school students, starting from four pages and aiming at 20 pages an hour. (P.200)
> For college students, 50 pages an hour. (P. 196)

15) Read a great deal.

Effort to increase the amount of reading must be made at the same time as effort to increase the speed. Learners must routinely read every day without fail. Adult learners, Matsumoto suggested, must read at least three hours a day (1965:193). For those who are serious about English study, Matsumoto recommended setting up a general rule to read one book a day as he himself did when he was a student in Japan and in the United States (1965:21).

16) Write without thinking in Japanese.

Writing means translation from Japanese to English for an average Japanese, as is also the case in reading (translation from English to Japanese). Matsumoto (1965:16) roughly estimated the English skills of Japanese people after studying English for ten years on a 100 point scale as: Reading--30 points, Writing--30 points, Listening--50 points, Speaking--60 points. It is interesting that he rated speaking twice as high as reading and writing despite a common belief that Japanese can read and write but cannot speak. He did not regard translation as writing because it is a different skill from real writing (He gave 80 points for translation skills in reading and writing).

One of the basic exercises that he recommended in writing without thinking in Japanese was "substitution drills" (1965:146) in which learners change only one or two words of each sentence:

> Original: Mr. Brown walks to work every morning.
> Learners can write:
> Mr. Brown rides to work every morning.
> Mr. Wilson walks to work every morning.
> Mrs. Thomas rides to work every afternoon.

It is important that learners do not substitute beyond their ability because learning correct structure is the focus of this exercise. Matsumoto suggested that learners substitute 100 sentences a day and continue it at least for the first year.

17) Write fast.

What prevents speed writing in Matsumoto's opinion were (1) translation and (2) too much concern for details such as spelling, articles, and morphemes (1965:150).

Speed writing is exactly the opposite of speed reading in that it requires the writer to think of only a few important words, according to Matsumoto. This thinking of a few words completely differs from outlining since these are the words that should naturally come to mind, as the writer thinks ahead of what to write while writing. Matsumoto illustrated this process by writing a famous Japanese folk tale in English. The following are the key words that came to his mind as he wrote:

> One upon a time.....an old man and an old woman
> mountain.....firewood river.....washing
> a big peach tumbling down the river..... (1965:155)

In other words, Matsumoto heard these words in his thoughts as he wrote and proceeded in the following way:
Between the first two groups of key words, Matsumoto easily inserted "there lived" because this was clearly the set phrase he used to see in many folk tales. What came to his mind next was "mountain," and since it was the old man's job to go to the mountain, he wrote "The old man went to the mountain everyday." As he wrote this, he immediately thought of the man's purpose of going to the mountain--"firewood"--and continued, "to gather firewood." While writing about the mountain, "river" came to mind; thus he wrote "The old woman went to the river," and as "washing" ran through his mind, he continued writing, "to do washing." Finally, "a big peach" and "tumbling down the river" in his mind made him write "One day when she was washing, a big peach came tumbling down the river." This was his demonstrated writing process and the end product was:

> MOMOTARO
>
> Once upon a time in Japan, there lived an old man and an old woman. The old man went to the mountain everyday to gather firewood. The old woman went to the river to do washing. One day when she was washing, a big peach came tumbling down the river. (P.157)

18) Write a great deal.

Writing as fast as Matsumoto illustrated takes a great deal of practice, which includes all the exercises discussed in this section. Of all those exercises, it goes without saying that writing itself plays the most practical role for the improvement

of writing. Matsumoto's suggestion to the average adult learners is writing one hour a day (1965:193) and to college students is writing 2000 words a day, which must be written in one hour as the ultimate goal (1965:197).

19) Understand in English.

Inputting information in English may not be so difficult for the second language learners as they are exposed to the target language in their daily lives, however, English is a foreign language for the Japanese and is still rarely accessible in daily situations--what they see and hear are almost always in Japanese. Thus, unless learners make conscious efforts to acquire knowledge in English, soon they become unable to think in English all the time as their base of knowledge is Japanese.

Although he was opposed to translation in general, he made an exception to recommend practice in changing everything learners hear and see in Japanese into English in their mind during leisure time. This practice differs from the word-for-word translation that Japanese are used to doing because it focuses on main points in Japanese and on finding appropriate expressions to convey the messages in English. In other words, learners must use comparable natural sounding English expressions rather than creating their own version of English based on the Japanese semantics and syntax.

As one of exercise materials, Matsumoto suggested reading Japanese newspapers in English. Once again, learners need to be concerned about only vital pieces of information to be conveyed in English. In so doing, learners may notice what they cannot say (do not know) in English, check the proper way of saying it by consulting dictionaries or English newspapers, and increase the amount of English input through the medium of Japanese.

20) Live in English.

Learners are encouraged to find friends who are willing to speak in English only and to expand this kind of relationship to bigger study circles. It is in their best interest to have maximum exposure to the English language at all times so that they can experience life in English.

It was also his ideal of English schools to provide students with complete language immersion experience all day on campus both inside and outside the classrooms, as has been realized in his school (The Tokyo Matsumoto School of English).

21) Switch language channels instantly.

Finally, learners must practice switching from one language to another in thinking so that they can think in an appropriate language and do not mix two different thought patterns. This is an exercise in controlling the language channels by alternating languages, sentence by sentence, or paragraph by paragraph, or wherever learners intend to.

I have summarized Matsumoto's main strategies by dividing them into twenty-one items and discussing each of them. Numbering of the items, however, does not mean to suggest that learners proceed in a certain order. Although these items do not cover all of his strategies, they should represent Matsumoto's distinctive characteristic that the training in internal use of language is focused on all four language skills from the beginner's level to the extremely advanced level.

In the next section, I will evaluate Matsumoto's "Thinking in English" approach from the perspectives I have described in the order of theory, objectives, and strategies.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of Theory

The uniqueness of Matsumoto's theory, in my opinion, is in the focus on the intrapersonal (internal) aspect of language as a means of communication for use in interpersonal (external) relations. It is an intriguing concept of language that helping humans to think relates directly to both receptive and productive skills in language. Indeed, humans often seem to be utilizing the language internally when they hear, speak, write, and read the language. When they use the language mentally, they are often thinking ahead as well--planning or predicting words to follow--either consciously or unconsciously. In my understanding, Matsumoto proposed maximizing this utility of language so that learners could improve both quality and quantity in the target language skills.

Since Matsumoto was not a linguist, he did not refer to any particular linguistic theory when he explained his principle. Yet, it is possible to compare his ideas with some of the major linguistic theories.

First of all, it is interesting to analyze Matsumoto's semantic argument that "sounds" or words are "emotionally" understood with "emotional movement/experience" before "intellectual understanding."

His argument can be compared with the theory of association, which explains that the child learns the meaning of words by associating concrete and visual objects with words. While association theory deals with the understanding of denotative meaning, such as learning that 'cat' means 'kitty,' Matsumoto dealt with much broader understanding, including connotations related to one's emotion; thus 'cat' may mean one's friend or enemy, depending on one's experience. Also, Matsumoto's view can explain how humans learn abstract words such as 'happiness,' which does not have concrete referents and which the theory of association therefore cannot account for. According to his explanation, humans gain "emotional understanding" of 'happiness' by associating "emotional movement" with this particular word. Thus, Matsumoto's idea can be explained using the word 'association,' but it should be made clear that he focused on associating words with emotional or mental experience, which may include concrete visual images but not necessarily.

Incidentally, Matsumoto's view of semantic development may provide different interpretations for a famous experiment by the classical behaviorist Ivan Pavlov. In Pavlov's experiment, a dog was repeatedly presented with meat powder together with the sound of a tuning fork. Eventually, the dog salivated at the sound without the presence of meat powder. Brown (1987:62) summarizes the general interpretation that "A previously neutral stimulus (the sound of the tuning fork) had acquired the power

to elicit a response (salivation) that was originally elicited by another stimulus (the smell of meat)." The behaviorists labeled this as classical conditioning and explained that by this kind of process of conditioning, stimulus-response connections, humans can learn more complex behaviors (Brown 1987:63). As Lashley (1954) comments, however, the conditioned response differs from the original unconditioned response. The dog, for example, salivated at the tone without meat powder, but did not try to eat the fork.

Matsumoto's idea may account for this dog's behavior much more simply. The dog had "emotional movement" with the tone of the fork because the dog used to eat meat powder while hearing the sound. In a sense, the sound was "conditioned" to include the memory of meat powder emotionally. Thus, even if the dog had known that the meat powder might no longer be provided, the dog would still salivate. In other words, the dog was reminded of the meat powder at the sound and salivated, but the dog, of course, did not regard the sound of the fork as the meat powder.

Besides the semantic question, the behaviorists' classical conditioning brings up another interesting topic for the linguistic analysis of Matsumoto's theory--the question of <u>syntactic</u> development. Behaviorists view this development as a result of "reinforcement, imitation, and successive approximations to mature performance" (Bohannon & Warren-Leubecker 1985:

173). In fact, Matsumoto's way of teaching tended to be misconstrued as identical to this behaviorists' view because he encouraged learners to speak and write like native speakers. Many people mistook 'learning to use English like native speakers' for mere imitation. However, as has been explained in the **STRATEGIES** section, he did not emphasize only imitation and memorization. On the contrary, he stressed the importance of speaking beyond the patterns and even did not care if students made some mistakes by trying to speak this way in the initial stages (**STRAGEGIES** 8). Imitation was basically regarded as the best approach to learning pronunciation. Memorization activity was, nonetheless, for the development of a foundation of knowledge rather than for the development of habits, and he signified the importance of learners forming their own sentences on the basis of what they memorized.

Therefore, Matsumoto's view of syntactic development seems more similar to the Cognitive view than the Behaviorist, encouraging more creative work by students. Although he did not specify what kind of cognitive activities learners go through in this process, as a matter of fact, he did have in mind basic formulas, which learners must understand and utilize in order to use English freely. In his opinion, English sentences can be divided into two major English formulas:

1) A ⇒ B ie) "I am a Japanese"

2) A → B ie) "I like Japan" (1980:8).

He commented that unlike Japanese, English always begins with the concept of A (subject) and explains what A is (A ⇒ B) or what A does (A → B). Describing four additional formulas for the variation of these two, he argued that English would become easy once learners understood these formulas, because they would be able to derive any sentence from these formulas and understand any sentence from the formulas as well.

Nevertheless, Matsumoto did not construct his teaching theory based on the structure or grammar of English, as does the Cognitive Code approach, as he stressed that "intellectual understanding" could result only from "emotional understanding" evoked by "sound" or the input of living English. Except for the basic formulas, he also did not encourage teaching or even explanation of grammar.

Matsumoto's attention to <u>structure</u> does not also mean that he disregarded <u>function</u> in language. Among the qualitative problems, as I indicated in the **OBJECTIVES** section, both structural and functional problems are included. Accordingly, Matsumoto regarded both elements as not only equally important in learning language but also inseparable. He called sentences like "It's me" and "Go get it" ungrammatical if they had not been used in proper situations, and he commented that "I was killed yesterday" was grammatical but not functional in ordinary situations (1970:221-2). Thus, it is hard to place his position

in the dichotomy between structuralism and functionalism; for him, language included both as one.

Apart from such theoretical comparisons, I believe that the concept of "emotional understanding" indeed explains the most basic understanding of language. For example, native speakers understand the utterance "It's chilly" emotionally by referring to their experience rather than thinking of the definition of "chilly," let alone translating into another language. Moreover, native speakers can emotionally distinguish "chilly" from other words in the continuum such as "cool," "freezing," and "cold." It seems that "emotional understanding" plays the central role in understanding even after the acquisition of "intellectual understanding."

Most Japanese students of English, however, always learn the vocabulary in Japanese translations; thus, they cannot directly understand English words if uttered. They can understand them after matching Japanese translations and then understanding translated Japanese words emotionally. This kind of process not only is unnatural but also causes inaccuracy. For one thing, there may not be some equivalent words in Japanese. Even if there are enough words to express differences between "chilly," "cool," "freezing," and "cold," semantic equivalence between English and Japanese is doubtful. Besides, there is the further complication of Japanese speakers having

different connotative ideas about the Japanese words, as Matsumoto explained that the ideas behind each word may differ from person to person.

In strict terms, it is not only abstract words such as "chilly" but also any word--whether a noun, adjective, verb, or adverb--that carries different emotional feelings between the speakers of the same language, as Matsumoto explained. Yet, these differences rarely cause confusion among the native speakers just as phonetic differences do not cause misunderstanding among the native speakers in pronunciation. Different emotional feelings between the speakers of different languages, however, are prone to cause misunderstanding, just as what are phonetic differences in one language (such as [l] and [r] in Japanese) may be phonemic differences in another (as /l/ and /r/ in English).

Accordingly, as Matsumoto said, it is of the utmost importance that students receive as much emotional experience as possible with the target language input. To provide such an input, translation must be avoided as a basic rule. Although it may not be possible to let students literally understand the language emotionally at all times, such as to let students experience the different weather to teach "chilly," "cool," and "freezing," students should be directed to pay more attention to how the words are used in reference to the particular units of

interaction. In other words, students should try to understand the meaning of words through context before being concerned with the definition of words. As input, natural contextualized situations with oral input are desirable as sounds carry a significant amount of verbal signs, such as volume, accent, pitch, and tempo, to show one's emotions for each utterance. Yet, as Matsumoto strongly recommended, reading also provides students with emotional experience. Although books do not present oral input (unless they are accompanied by audio tapes), they are contextualized and often illustrate not only verbal but also paralinguistic features, including narrative messages to help the reader to imagine and to hear the utterances mentally.

As a result, foreign language learners can have ample opportunity to learn the meaning of words emotionally and, accordingly, they should be encouraged to understand emotionally before intellectually (such as by memorizing the meaning of words via definitions). Based on Matsumoto's theory, it can be said that the language should be acquired by this kind of "emotional input."

Evaluation of Objectives

One of the major opposing groups to the "think in English" approach in Japan protests against the objective of learning natural-sounding English by overcoming what I have labelled qualitative problems. Their ideas are based on the assumption that English is no longer a language only for British and American speakers and that Japanese should create their own version of the English language. They believe that Japanese English is not only proper for Japanese but also more communicative. Watanabe (1983:84-9), for example, defends pronunciation of Japanese English in that the hearer can understand from the context and that Japanese do not need to worry about the 'θ' sound and can pronounce "sink" for "think" and still be understood. He uses similar reasoning to argue that native-speaker accent is not essential in pronunciation. For example, he claims that "interesting" without the accent on the first syllable can be understood because of the context.

This assumption seems to be disregarding many claims that Japanese often pronounce words unintelligiblly. In the above example, the hearer may not even guess the speaker said "sink," let alone "think."

Watanabe goes on to assume boldly that loan words in Japanese such as "masscommi" and "back mirror" for "mass media" and "rear-view mirror" will be used worldwide as a result of spreading Japanese English (p.89).

In my view, learning natively spoken English, which is already accepted in the world, seems the most practical way to learn it as a tool for better international communication. After all, English is not a second but a foreign language in Japan and is used only when Japanese is not adequate for communication. If Japanese used English based on Japanese phonetics, syntax, and semantics, it would not serve the basic purpose of speaking English--to avoid miscommunication.

Another controversy in Japan may be whether or not stressing the learning of native-like English signifies American or British values and leads to the loss of Japanese identities, especially as a result of thinking in English. Matsumoto, in fact, wrote his textbooks in American English, but this was simply because American English was the language he learned. Matsumoto's idea itself did not adhere to any single kind of English. On the contrary, he believed that there was enough uniformity within English which was natively spoken, and that it should be the learners' choice, as to what kind of English they learn. His only suggestions were that it could be better for the learners not to mix different kinds of English [to avoid possible misunderstandings] (1970:232).

Matsumoto also never denied the necessity of thinking in Japanese, as he suggested thinking in English only when one needs to communicate in English. Besides, thinking in English alone should hardly change the national identity at all. Even

Sapir, who proposed a radical hypothesis of linguistic relativity and determinism and said that people are "at the mercy of the particular language," never cautioned that languages cause people to change or lose their identity but only to "predispose certain choices of interpretation" (in Mandelbaum 1958:162).

Another fundamental question may be if it is at all possible to acquire skills at the level of educated native speakers and to think in a foreign language. One of the major motivations of the group that advocates Japanese English, for example, lies in the despair that "it is impossible to have two native tongues" (Watanabe 1983:89). Since the average Japanese begins to study English at the age of twelve, almost at the end of the so-called "critical period," and studies it as a foreign language, it tends to be concluded that it is next to impossible for Japanese to acquire native-speaker English proficiency.

However, there is no reason to give up learning English aiming at native-speaker proficiency because it is possible to acquire English at a very close level to educated native speakers even after puberty. As Brown (1987:42) says:

> The "classic" argument is that a critical point for second language acquisition occurs around puberty, beyond which people seem to be relatively incapable of acquiring a nativelike accent of the second language. This has led some to assume, incorrectly, that by the age of 12 or 13 you are "over the hill" when it comes to the possibility of successful second language learning. Such an assumption must be viewed in the light of what it really means to be "successful" in learning a second language, and particularly the role of "accent" as a component of success.

It may still appear to be impossible to think in English as Matsumoto illustrated, yet my interpretation is that even a very beginner can start to think in English. As I have explained, to think in English may be simply interpreted as using English in thinking without the interruption of another language. Thus, it may be better not to consider this activity a matter of possibility but one of relativity, as to what degree learners can think in English. As learners practice thinking in English, they should become able to think longer and faster in English, possibly at the level of educated native speakers.

In terms of the qualitative errors, Matsumoto claimed that thinking in Japanese was the most serious cause. This brings up the subject of the native language interference, on which extensive research has been conducted in the wake of the contrastive analysis boom during the second half of this century. What seems to have been concluded today is that there are many kinds of errors whose causes can hardly be identified. It is, nevertheless, evident that many errors are due to the influence of the mother tongue.

Matsumoto saw the profound influence of translation practices used in Japan in L2 English errors. He could not stress enough the importance of not basing the thoughts in Japanese and regarded this recognition of the native language interference as the departure for real language learning and for improvement of errors from other sources.

The pragmatic problem, another qualitative one, has become the major focus of attention, especially since the Council of Europe started to develop communication-based syllabi almost twenty years ago. This kind of syllabi may be applied usefully with their practical examples and focus on teaching students not to confuse the functions of the native language with those of the target language, as Matsumoto suggested.

Another of Matsumoto's objectives, speed, as well as extensive reading and writing, are also crucial in using a language as a means of communication. Unfortunately, it has never been the objective in English instruction given in schools in Japan to read or to write for speed or for quantity. This perhaps applies to regular foreign language teaching in any country. The time may have already come to consider implementing these goals in all language courses, starting with even the beginning students, in this age of rapid communication.

All in all, Matsumoto's objectives differ from other methods as they are not intended for any particular level of learners to achieve a certain stage of goals. They are ultimate general objectives for any level of learners and must perhaps be taken as the directions toward achieving learners' individual levels of needs and, thus, are process-oriented rather than goal-oriented as to the end of learning.

EVALUATION OF STRATEGIES

A likely response to Matsumoto's strategies would be whether they are not too much for average learners who do not have any wish to become English experts. Matsumoto certainly demands perseverance and hard work. It must be hard for professional adults to read three hours and write one hour each day after work. It is even harder for English majors to read a book and write 2000 words each day as Matsumoto suggested. Similarly, some strategies may be considered impossible to follow for general learners, for they appear to be too advanced. These strategies include challenging tasks for even educated native English speakers. It may take a professional native-speaking writer years before becoming able to imagine key words by thinking ahead and to connect these words by listening to the internal voice all in one rapid writing sequence. It may require arduous training for educated bilinguals to understand information given in Japanese by interpreting simultaneously into English, as well as switching languages for thinking on demand at any time.

It is regretable, however, if these strategies intimidate learners and make them lose their confidence in learning English. My interpretation is again that "thinking in English" is a matter of relativity. In a broad sense of the term, even beginners can think in English when the native language does not intervene

between thoughts developed mentally in English. Yet, some strategies, such as the ones mentioned in the preceding paragraph, demand the higher ability of using English in thinking. Matsumoto in a sense, explored the human capability for using a language and presented how humans utilize it as a means of communication at its best. Learners should thus regard Matsumoto's demonstrations as ultimate possibilities, rather than determining them as too advanced and therefore giving up studying.

To be more specific, some exercises are easier than others, and learners should aim at progressive improvement. At the first stage, it may be good for any learner to focus on undoing translation habits. The learner may begin with some fundamental exercises such as listening to good authentic English and concentrating on just imitating it. Learners should not think in Japanese about the meaning of the words they hear but should instead visualize the situation: time, place, objects, people, facial expressions, emotions behind those faces, and other features. The learner can memorize sentences and stories as sounds, without translating sentences word-by-word. If the learner should need to know the meaning of sentences before memorizing rather than after, he/she may read through the translated transcripts (if available) only once to grasp the general idea and to ease the anxiety. Similarly, the learner can tackle problem solving, rapid reading, substitution writing exercises without translation.

At the second stage, the learner can focus on using English in thinking and on extending its use. Although it may not last even ten seconds at the beginning, the learner can try monologues in English, either aloud or silently, without interrupting them with thoughts in Japanese. The learner should eventually become able to think longer and to think of wider topics in English. Any faithful learner can reach this second stage, where he/she begins to think in English

The rest of the stages can be spent on perfecting thinking in English skills. The learner can focus on the skills to think ahead in English. In listening to a speaker, the learner may keep questioning mentally what the speaker intends to say next in order to improve the expectancy skills to become able to predict the kind of message about to be given. Then the learner may proceed to practice thinking while talking in order to cultivate the ability to use the language both internally and externally simultaneously.

I have illustrated these stages only as examples to explain that Matsumoto's strategies are not at all unreasonable. The learners may determine their own focus at each stage to improve their ability to think in English while following the strategies.

Although Matsumoto mainly proposed self-study strategies, it is possible for teaching practitioners also to design the syllabus for classroom teaching based on his proposals. As suggested before, by elaborating more on foci and selecting

appropriate exercises, it is possible to make a graded syllabus. According to the level of students, the syllabus designer can also integrate some other methodologies for teaching techniques and materials without contradicting Matsumoto's principles. For example, in introducing vocabulary to beginners, in particular, the techniques used in the Total Physical Response may be helpful by letting students act them out, thus promoting "emotional experiences" before "intellectual understanding." Some of the notional-functional textbooks may be selected for pragmatic foci, as well as problem-solving and decision-making exercises. Content-based textbooks may also be useful to provide English input of general knowledge so that students can think of various topics in English.

CONCLUSION

Although Matsumoto proposed his approach for only Japanese learners of English, his proposal can be applied to any foreign language or second language teaching (I will only use 'foreign language teaching' for the rest of the discussion in referring to both).

First, the internal use of the target language should be focused on in everyday teaching. Students should be encouraged to use the language in their minds from the first day of learning. Many kinds of exercises to promote thinking in the target language can be invented, including problem-solving and decision-making exercises. When students become able to think in the target language extensively without the interruption of the mother tongue, they can use the language more fluently and accurately for both productive and receptive skills because they no longer translate. Once students become able to think in the target language, they can practice using the language to think ahead, as has been explained, in order to further improve language skills.

Secondly, the language should be taught in a way that it becomes flexible enough to be used for developing complex ideas and thinking freely. Real speaking situations are complex and unpredictable so that learners must learn to be able to use

the language in any situation. Patterns alone do not provide this kind of flexibility in language. Instead of regular pattern drills, Matsumoto suggested that learners practice saying the same sentence in different ways by beginning the sentence with a different word. This was an exercise to apply fundamental knowledge that learners had gained fully to new situations, changing sentence structures and forms if necessary. This kind of exercise is important to make language flexible.

Thirdly, language should be taught from both macro and micro perspectives. For example, in teaching speaking, there may be two approaches: one, micro, which focuses on mistakes students make; the other, macro, which encourages students to produce an oral message without caring about mistakes. As has been analyzed, Matsumoto took both approaches, asking students to both memorize the sentences correctly and create their own sentences to speak more freely without worrying about mistakes. Similarly in listening, Matsumoto emphasized the importance of not only learning foreign sounds but also listening for only key words to comprehend a message. In most foreign language teaching, there seems to be a strong tendency to study language from only micro points of view; more use of macro perspectives is desirable.

Finally, extensive and rapid reading should be taught in classrooms. Reading is one of the most useful means not only of communication but also of learning language. However,

reading is not necessarily learned most usefully in foreign language classes in general, where focusing on reading every word without fail often results in translation activities (a micro perspective of reading). Reading itself, according to Matsumoto, is the most powerful source of foreign language input. It is in their best interest if learners can increase the amount of input by learning to read both extensively and rapidly without translating into the native language. In a practical sense, it is also useful if learners acquire this kind of skill because usually they will need to identify important pieces of information out of a vast body of work when they have to read in a foreign language. Speed reading may also help learners develop the ability to think fast in a foreign language as well. Although some foreign languages (such as Japanese and Chinese) may take years of students' effort to read various materials, these techniques can be taught even with the limited number of characters the learners master. Moreover, Matsumoto's strategies for rapid and extensive reading can be applied even in a beginner's course.

In retrospect, although Matsumoto's proposals tended to be considered impractical, if not impossible, they may well be adopted at any level in any language learning situation. Further evaluation and development of his approach by putting it into practice is the next step.

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